

Social identity, rent-seeking, and redistribution

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Propositions accompanying the PhD-thesis

Social Identity, Rent-Seeking, and Redistribution

Henrik W. Zaunbrecher

1. Decreasing absolute or relative wages make people more selfish. (Chapter 2)
2. When the rich see others ascend to their level, they demand more resources for themselves. (Chapter 2)
3. Competition with other groups strengthens ingroup bias and social identification. (Chapter 3)
4. The way in which social identity is measured can potentially strengthen social identity in itself. (Chapter 3)
5. Migration between groups does not lower social identification with the own group and can result in escalating competition between groups. (Chapter 4)
6. As growth rates decrease, economies get closer to zero-sum and the resulting social polarisation becomes a more pressing political issue.
7. To understand human behaviour, understanding social interactions is crucial. What we want is often determined by what others have and by who we are in relation to them.
8. Critics of experimental economics often point out the lack of external validity glossing over the fact that alternative approaches are often already struggling with internal validity.
9. Any sufficiently advanced identification strategy is indistinguishable from magic.
10. "How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it." - Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*
11. "We have not succeeded in answering all our problems—indeed we sometimes feel we have not completely answered any of them. The answers we have found have only served to raise a whole set of new questions. In some ways we feel that we are as confused as ever, but we think we are confused on a higher level, and about more important things." - Earl Clarence Kelley, *The Workshop Way of Learning*